

Moulsham Junior School Past Pupils' Newsletter

Spring 2002

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Join us at the Open Afternoon on 18th May 2002

We look forward to welcoming friends old and new to this year's Past Pupils' Open Afternoon on Saturday 18th May. As before, the school will be open from 1-5pm, with displays of even more photos and memorabilia; refreshments; and country and maypole dancing by present pupils. Plus, of course, the opportunity to wander round your former classrooms and chat to classmates you may not have seen for many years. Our mailing list has now risen to over 350 past pupils, some of whom will be coming to the Open Afternoon for the first time.

You may notice a few changes in the school building since last year, in particular the replacement windows and improvements to the veranda in the former Girls' School. Further upgrading work is in the pipeline this summer, including new fire doors. So do come along this year if you want to see the school before the next round of changes. And speaking of changes, this will be the last year that cars will be allowed to make a right turn from Princes Road into the school grounds. From September, as part of the "Safer Journeys to School" initiative, cars approaching Moulsham from the Wood Street roundabout will have to go past the school to the next roundabout before turning back and making a left turn into the grounds. Similarly, drivers wanting to go towards the Army and Navy on leaving the school will have to turn left first, and go all the way round the Wood Street roundabout.

The Head Teacher, Mr Kemp, has asked me to say a big Thank You to all those of you who have sent in donations over the past year. The money is being used for planting new trees along the school drive, and more ornamental grasses on the "turning circle" next to the Princes Road entrance. As you know, no charge is made for producing and distributing the Newsletter, and it would be too costly in staff time to introduce an annual subscription. But the Head Teacher is always pleased to receive voluntary donations in lieu (about £3 a year), and if you do wish to contribute, you may send cheques, payable to Moulsham Junior School, to Mr Kemp, Head Teacher, Moulsham Junior School, Princes Road, Chelmsford, CM2 9DG.

The school website is *almost* up and running at the time of writing, and the plan is to post a copy of the latest Past Pupils' Newsletter on it each term. If you let us have your email address, we will advise you of the name of the school website in due course, and let you know when each new Newsletter is due out. Internet addicts may well have come across the website for tracing and contacting former school friends: www.friendsreunited.co.uk. If you have registered on this site under Moulsham Juniors, as I know some of you have, you may be able to contact former classmates who are not yet on our mailing list. If they would like to receive the Newsletter, or better still contribute their own memories and news, do please encourage them to send me an email at kathleen.boot@virgin.net.

We hope you will enjoy this latest issue of the Newsletter. Hilary and I are particularly pleased to have heard from two more former members of staff this time - Mrs Maureen Healy and Mr Peter Davidson, and you can read their recollections of Moulsham Juniors on pages 4-6. Thank you to all the past pupils who have sent in news and memories, too. We hope more and more of you will find time to drop us a few lines, as we have readers from every decade from the school's opening in 1938 to the present day. Do keep sending in your articles, news, photos, and addresses of friends and members of your family who were at Moulsham Juniors and would like to receive the Newsletter. My address is 1A Vicarage Road, Chelmsford, CM2 9PG, or email kathleen.boot@virgin.net.

Best wishes to you all from Hilary Balm (nee Dye) and myself, and we look forward to seeing as many of you as possible on 18th May

Kathleen Boot (nee Nash)
1951-55

Moulsham Junior School Today: School Report

This term our school report is written by Mrs Hilda Ibrahim who is the International Links Co-ordinator for Moulsham Junior School.

Term started in a very exciting way for Jenny McCutcheon, Deputy Headteacher, and myself with a visit to Anzio, Italy to visit the Scuola Via Ambrosini, one of our partner schools and meet again with Amelia and Lucilla, two teachers who visited Moulsham last year. The school brochure gives the following information about Anzio, " Anzio is a Province of Rome and in 1944 the Anglo-American allied troops landed all along the coast of Anzio. Their offensive action led to the liberation of Rome.

Today Anzio is a lovely holiday resort endowed with the necessary harbour equipment and services for those interested in sailing and surfing as a sport or as a hobby."

Our partner school is the largest of a group of five primary schools in Anzio all under direction of one Elisabeth Spaziani.

We were given guided tours of three of the schools and of course we compared what happens with life at Moulsham Junior School. The Italian children have a longer day starting at 8.30 am and finishing at 4.30 pm although if they choose to do homework they finish at lunchtime on two days. There is no staffroom and the only facility for staff is a coffee machine with staff spending the whole day with the children. At morning break the children do not go outside but have a snack they bring from home. On the day of our visit at lunchtime staff and children enjoyed a lunch of pasta with a tomato based sauce, cold meat and salad followed by a piece of fruit.

The children were eager to know about the children at this school particularly what our children did at break time and about our uniform. The Italian uniform for girls is a royal blue smock and for boys a top similar to that worn by male nurses in this country. The school is soon introducing a sweatshirt similar to our own.

The Italian teachers wanted to know how our teachers did their long term planning. In Italy the summer holiday for children is ten weeks while teachers spend two of those weeks planning for the following year. Children identified as requiring considerable learning support have a full time teacher with them throughout the day.

We visited Rome in the company of Amelia and Lucilla and as neither Jenny or I had been before it was wonderful visiting the sights in the company of such knowledgeable guides.

This was a very successful trip enabling us to complete a joint project proposal for a Comelius grant from the European Union. We have mounted a visually exciting display to share our experiences with our children. The object that has created most interest is Harry Potter in Italian complete with a rat's hat on the front cover.

We believe our children will benefit through the working relationships and friendships that were reinforced by our visit and have every chance of flourishing over the years to come.

Tesco Computer Vouchers - "every little helps"

If you shop at Tesco and are not collecting computer vouchers for anyone else, do please bring or send them to Moulsham Juniors, who will make good use of them. Last year the school collected enough for two laptop computers and some useful software, and hope to do even better this year. Please send vouchers to the School Office, Moulsham Junior School, Princes Road, Chelmsford CM2 9DG

Peter Davidson: A happy teaching team, 1969-1985

We are very pleased to have made contact recently with a member of staff who joined Moulsham Juniors when it went "mixed" in September 1969. Some of you may remember seeing notes from Mr Davidson at the March 1999 reunion. On that occasion, he recalled in particular the delightful children and the support of a dedicated, lively group of teachers; sadness when children or teachers left or were ill, and the bomb scares, which reminded him of the war in 1940. Here are some extracts from a letter we have now received from Mr Davidson.

"Thank you very much for the surprise newsletter which I found fascinating. I was very sad to learn of Mr Picken's death. He was good company and it was a pleasure to talk to him. We used to meet in the town when shopping and have a gossip. I have not lost touch with my former pupils, either. I often meet them around Chelmsford. One services my car excellently and another is a dental assistant at our dentists.

You asked me about my memories. It is not easy to remember all the details, as I am the kind of person who lives life to the full and looks forward to the future. Mrs Donovan is right about us being a happy team and I believe it rubbed off on the children, who had to be ordered out of the classrooms at playtime because they got so absorbed in their work. We let our hair down in the summer when we dressed up in outrageous costumes and took on the pupils at rounders, which we all thoroughly enjoyed. Our head, Mr Sturgeon, was a dynamic leader and kept us on our toes.

When I joined Moulsham I was responsible on my own for the music, having to train two choirs and the orchestra. We used to take a group to the hospitals and give a carol concert for the old people who were much cheered by the children speaking to them. The orchestra grew over the years until we had brass, woodwind, strings and percussion. I adapted music for the various instruments and made my own arrangements to suit the players' capabilities. They were good enough to play for parents at many concerts. I had responsibility for music but was not head of music in such a large school. That post was filled by the talented musician [Sally Martin] mentioned by Poppy Donovan.

I remember the pupils putting on plays. One of the boys had a BBC producer for a dad and that influence made for quality performance. We had Christmas dinner in the north wing hall. The children made up funny place cards for us. I still have one with a drawing of a boozy Scotsman on it! The men were a minority on the staff but we held our own I think. Brian Day's wife Margaret [then Miss Foster] won my admiration for the way she picked up dyslexic pupils in my class and helped them greatly. I am proud to say no one left my class unable to read and that includes one who was a non-reader and an Iraqi girl who spoke no English at first.

I would not like to pick out anyone from my former pupils. They all mattered to me and I could not help making friends, although as a teacher you have to be scrupulously fair. At one time I was responsible for the school art policy after gaining a certificate on a course. Being a main maths student at one time made me eligible for a maths course with Shirley Stewart. Are her ideas still current I wonder? That reminds me of when we changed to decimals. I seem to remember it went well.

After retiring, I was lured back to supply teaching, which I did for some years in nearly every school in the area. I did not fully retire until I was 66 in 1996, when I gave up Saturday morning Music School at the Appleton School. I still keep up my music by playing in the first violin section of the Essex Symphony Orchestra. One of my former students, who is a free-lance professional, sometimes plays next to me."

"Hard work but happy times" - Mrs Maureen Healy's satisfying teaching career

A few weeks ago, Hilary and I had the pleasure of meeting former Moulsham teacher, Mrs Maureen Healy, another member of the happy team recalled by Poppy Donovan and Peter Davidson. Over an enjoyable working lunch, fitted into her busy schedule of meetings, Mrs Healy described some of the highlights of teaching at Moulsham Juniors from September 1973 to July 1986.

Originally from Ireland, Mrs Healy trained and worked as a Montessori teacher, first in London and then Philadelphia USA, before coming to live in Chelmsford as a newly-wed. After completing a further two-year teacher training course in Brentwood, she set about finding a teaching post locally. In those days, you applied to the County Education Authority, not direct to a particular school, and Mrs Healy was pleased to be appointed to Moulsham Juniors. She had already seen round the school, and was impressed by the extensive facilities and the thorough co-ordination of the curriculum by the Headmaster, Mr Tom Sturgeon. Mrs Healy's own two children, Martin and Fiona, became pupils at Moulsham Juniors when she joined the staff. They too were very happy at the school.

The Junior School was even larger in 1973 than it is today. There were no less than 24 classes, each with about 30 pupils. This meant using a number of huts and demountables as classrooms, some on the playground, and using one of the classrooms in the Infants School. Although the old air raid shelters were not used as classrooms, Mrs Healy did on occasion take a history lesson inside one of them, to show the children what it was like for their grandparents' generation during wartime raids.

Long before the National Curriculum existed, Mr Sturgeon planned the syllabus for each year group with military precision. In History, for example, the 1st year [now called Year 3] might study dinosaurs and the Romans, the 2nd year Vikings and Normans, the 3rd year Tudor England and the top year the Industrial Revolution and the World Wars. It was then for the Head of each year to agree with the other five class teachers for that year exactly how each topic should be presented. Mrs Healy became Head of 1st Year Juniors in September 1974, with her own budget for additional resources.

The Maths syllabus was laid out in a similar way. In English, there was spelling, grammar, literature, graded reading, books and poetry. Mrs Healy recalls that the Narnia stories were popular, along with Paddington Bear, Roald Dahl, and Williard Price's wonderful wildlife adventure books. There were no Science lessons in the modern sense, but Nature Study involved growing bulbs in glass jars and learning about the cycle of plant, bird and animal life through the seasons. At the end of each school year there were NFER Tests (National Foundation for Educational Research) in Maths, English and Verbal Reasoning.

The range of other lessons was rich and varied. For Painting and Craftwork, the children wore old shirts back to front when splashing with powder paints or modelling clay or junk materials. Art could be reproducing pictures from books, or imaginative work, perhaps based on the current class story. Sewing for the younger pupils might be cross stitch and zigzag samplers on binca cloth, while the older pupils worked with free design on hessian. Knitting, as experienced by pupils in the 1950s and earlier, had already disappeared from the curriculum.

The class teachers also took PE in one of the halls, with an abundance of apparatus, and outdoor games, with separate groups for boys and girls in winter. Each week there would be dance or drama, sometimes using tapes from the radio. At the colourful country dancing displays each summer on the lawn, the girls still wore the famous black skirts with coloured braid. Sports Day, out on the field, was another truly grand event, with Poppy Donovan ensuring that the occasion was superbly organised and fun for the children of all 24 classes.

Then, as now, there was a strong musical tradition, with memorable evening recitals for parents. Instruments were taught as well as singing. There were recorder groups for beginners through to advanced - treble, descant and bass. Mrs Healy was especially impressed with Peter Davidson's patience and encouragement as violin teacher, and Sylvia Wilson's work with the after school choirs.

Mrs Healy loved Christmas at Moulsham. On a particular Monday a little while before the end of term, she would look forward eagerly to opening the door of the South Wing ["Girls"] Hall, knowing that she would find it magnificently transformed by one of the 4th year teachers, Mrs Joyce Allen, who was a wonderful artist. Incorporating splendid pictures and decorations prepared by the pupils, on a theme such as Victorian Christmas, Pantomime, or Christmas Carols, Mrs Allen and her husband would have worked all weekend to create a magical and breathtaking setting for the Christmas concerts, shows and celebrations. Pictures in the South Wing Hall were by 3rd and 4th year classes, and in the North Wing Hall by 1st and 2nd years. Opening the doors to see the current year's masterpiece never failed to amaze and delight.

Mrs Healy thoroughly enjoyed her years at Moulsham Juniors. Her experience was both enriching and satisfying. "Hard work but happy times" is how she described it. The children were a delight to teach, and the Headmaster had assembled a dedicated team of teachers. Her colleagues were friendly and helpful, and the annual staff dinner at the County Hotel was a most enjoyable social occasion.

The late 1970s and '80s saw many new initiatives in curriculum delivery. It was the age of the 'topic', combining as many subjects as possible into an area, which could then be explored in a less fragmented way. The learning experience became a more meaningful 'whole' for the child. Science became very important too, using an experiential approach through exploration and discovery. Mrs Pat King was Head Teacher of the Junior School at this time.

In 1986, Mrs Healy moved on to be Deputy Head at Our Lady Immaculate School in London Road, very much smaller with just seven classes. Later, she became Head Teacher at St Albans Roman Catholic School, Harlow, driving through Hatfield Heath and the beautiful Essex countryside from Chelmsford every day. Both posts were challenging and successful, and even after retirement she worked for a while inspecting schools in Hertfordshire, the North-West and East London areas, and as a supply teacher.

Still living in Chelmsford, Mrs Healy has now thrown herself with her characteristic enthusiasm into voluntary work, when she is not busy looking after her three grandchildren. Much of her time and energy is devoted to work for the Chelmsford Night Shelter for the Homeless (CHESS). From helping cook breakfasts at the Shelter, she has progressed to Chair of the Trustees. This involves supporting the small number of full time staff and the 80 or so volunteers without whom the organisation could not operate. The work has opened her eyes to the challenges of caring for homeless people, and uses her talent for teamwork and organisation to the full.

Mumbo Jumbo Sapient (Wise Rubbish)

Thank you to Michelle, a Moulsham pupil from 1972-5, for sending us a Junior School magazine entitled Mumbo Jumbo Sapient. It is the only copy we have of a magazine from the period after the two schools were combined. In it, the four school Houses are named as Buckingham, Caernarvon, Sandringham and Windsor. Names of pupils you might recognise include Gillian Croxton, Catherine Gartside, Gary Strickland, Heather Pope, Andrew Du Preez, Tracey Cook, Paul Wheeler, Joanne Smith, Kathleen Austin, Nicky Corbett, Catherine Turner, Michael Swift, and Maria Jones, all of whom wrote reports on House or school activities for the magazine. More from Mumbo Jumbo in future Newsletters.

Peter Turrall MBE: From Widford to Moulsham in 1938

We are very pleased to hear from Peter Turrall, another of the first day pupils who joined Moulsham Junior Boys' School in September 1938. Now officially retired, but keeping very busy, Peter still lives in Chelmsford, and gives lectures on Marconi the Inventor, and Chelmsford in days gone by. You may have seen him talking about Marconi's on BBC Look East in recent months, or noticed his articles in the local press. Despite active involvement in a number of charitable causes, Peter has also found time to write a book about Chelmsford 55 years ago, to be published at the end of February (details on next page). Peter says he remembers with special pride his early schooldays and the school motto "Work and be happy". He writes:

"In the mid 1930's, my parents decided to move from their Springfield address to the village of Widford, which in those days, was a sleepy little outlet on the outskirts of Chelmsford. This was after I spent just two weeks at Trinity Road School and one term at Friars Infants School before being accepted into the Widford C of E School, which stood behind St Mary's Church, Widford. The teachers at Widford School were the Misses Rankin and Knight plus a junior teaching assistant. There were only two classes, infant and junior, both mixed, with pupils up to the age of about 14. It was a very small Victorian building, with a tiny entrance hall doubling up as a cloakroom. The entrance was in a small lane known as Robjohns. High windows ensured that pupils could not look outside and the desks were solid oak with brass inkwells. We were taught to use pencil in the lower class first of all, and pen and ink as we progressed. It seemed endless - we had to learn our tables parrot fashion and there was also plenty of reading. Both held us in good stead later in life. There were no facilities for PT or games within the building. These had to be taken in the adjacent football field, weather permitting.

Adjacent to Widford School was the Caretaker's House. This was let to a Mrs Little, whose daughter attended the school. On the other side was a wooden black-painted hut, which was used for the Widford Scouts, Guides, Cubs and Brownies. When Moulsham Junior School opened, Widford School ceased to exist. The School, Caretaker's House and Scout Hut have long since been demolished, and the area is now a car park for the Church.

Miss Rankin and Miss Wright, who lived with her in Widford and previously taught at Friars School, both joined the new School, with Miss Rankin taking the post of Headmistress. Together with my younger brother Michael, I started in the new Moulsham Junior Boys School, going first into the class run by Harold Picken, then William (Daddy) Gardiner's class and finally Mr. Hymas'. Coming to Moulsham was an eye-opener with its large airy classrooms with windows which could be opened, fixed instead of portable blackboards, and a large Assembly Hall. Vastly different from the compact and very dull school I had attended at Widford.

My colleagues in that first class at Moulsham have been pictured in past editions of the Newsletter. Many of them I have met in later life, some quite regularly. "Daddy" Gardiner's sons Ian and Nigel, and David Bell joined Widford Church Choir at the same time as me. Peter Smith joined Chelmsford Borough Council Engineer's Department whilst I joined the Town Clerks Department so I saw him in post school days. Others went to various Schools in the Chelmsford Area including KEGS and the old Mid Essex Technical College. I joined Moulsham Seniors and enjoyed Further Education at both Mid Essex Tech and Dovedale.

Memories of Moulsham Juniors are mostly of wartime activities, as, soon after the school was opened, the 1939-45 war was upon us. Lessons were disrupted as we made our way into the air raid shelters and our parents were very concerned for our safety as bombs and bullets were dropping all over the place. School starting and leaving off times were changed so that the children were able to get home in the early afternoon. Many parents came to meet their offspring and escort them home.

Harold Picken was called to the Army but I remember many confrontations he had with members of the class if they did not pay attention. One day when a certain Bob "2" was talking, Harold Picken got a bunch of keys and threw these at him in the back row of the class. It caught Bob right on the nose and, yes, the blood started to flow. Harold was an excellent shot even with chalk. However, he was a very kind man and very athletic. He had, if I remember correctly, the nickname of "Tarzan".

"Daddy" Gardiner was easy to get on with but sometimes quite strict. He was also my Choirmaster at Widford Church where he played the organ and had his wife and two sons and sometimes his daughters in the Choir. He was excellent at drawing animals and birds on the blackboard in coloured chalk.

Stanley Petchey, the Headmaster, came from Trinity Road School and many a time I have felt his hand on the back of my legs for some misdemeanour. During the war his wife came to the School to teach, as many of the men went away into the Armed Forces. Names of the Teachers I remember are Mrs. French, Mr. Hudson, Mr. Burt and a Mrs Worrell.

One outlet the boys had was to keep a plot of land behind the air raid shelters for cultivation. I shared one with Reggie Folkard who in later life played football for Chelmsford City. Reg and I grew some wonderful vegetables which we took home to our parents. However, we were growing some marrows when school Summer holidays came along, and I agreed with Reg that I would come to the school and water the marrows until they were ready. When we went back to school in the September, Reg accused me of taking the marrows and not giving him one. He never let up on this and even today I do not know who stole the very large marrows from our plot!

I have read with interest in the Newsletter about some of my old class mates. I am in correspondence with Donald Post who now lives in the West country. His Grandfather was the Foreman responsible for looking after the 450ft masts which stood in the yard of Marconi's at New Street. I was researching some Marconi history when another old Moulsham boy, Gordon Evans, put me in touch with Don. I also sat for some time on KEGS 450th Anniversary Appeal and met a number of people who had passed through Moulsham Juniors. One name mentioned at that time was Ralph Smith who has since passed away. He was a Professor before he retired."

In our next issue, we shall include more about Peter's distinguished career, which led to his being awarded the MBE for work with Marconi's in the export field. Meanwhile, if any of his old classmates would like to get in touch with him, they can send an e-mail to: peter_turrall@lineone.net or a letter to 96, Patching Hall Lane, Chelmsford. Essex. CM1 4DB.

Peter Turrall's book, entitled **A Stroll Through Time**, is based on his life in and around Chelmsford just over 55 years ago. It highlights the streets, shops, events, sporting activities and some of the characters. Most of the twenty chapters are supplemented by postcards of Chelmsford scenes from his own vast collection. Copies of the book are expected to be available by the end of February, priced £11-00 plus postage and packing at cost. Cheques should be made payable to P.A.T. Turrall. For each copy sold, Peter is donating 50p to the Chelmsford Cathedral Millennium Congregational Appeal Fund and 50p to The Chelmsford Mencap Gateway Award. Orders can be sent to 96, Patching Hall Lane, Chelmsford. Essex. CM1 4DB or by e-mail to: peter_turrall@lineone.net

Memories of the Junior Girls' School, 1940-44

Thank you to Margaret Haldane, nee Laurence, who was at Moulsham Junior Girls' School during the war, and sends the following recollections, which she hope may spark off happy memories for others at school in the early '40s:

- What a wonderful person Miss Rankin was! As I didn't want to sit the High School exam, I helped her quite a lot and had an insight into office work.
- Miss Simmonds lived in Goldlay Road. Her father was A E Simmonds, the printer in Baddow Road. She had a brother, but I don't think it was the David Simmonds mentioned [in a previous newsletter], as his parents lived in Lynmouth Avenue.
- Miss Firmin, who was a great friend of Miss Simmonds, lived in Upper Bridge Road with her mother and twin sisters.
- There has been no mention of Miss Hough (or Huff?). I remember she was "fierce" and could be heard through the adjoining classroom walls. I always found her very fair minded. I believe she had a headship in Brentwood.
- Do you remember Walls ice lollies, triangular in shape and in a cardboard cover? These were sold at the school gate by a man on a 'stop me and buy one' bicycle, and cost 1d for a whole one or $\frac{1}{2}$ d for a half.
- I remember walking to school along Princes Road when the American convoys passed by, and the Americans would throw masses of sweets on to the grass verges for us to scramble to get.
- I remember taking screw top jars to school to be filled with drinking chocolate powder. Also Horlicks tablets at 4 for 1d. The teachers did the dispensing.
- In the air raids, we sat on wooden benches in the flat roofed brick-built shelters, where we unravelled material to stuff cushions to sit on in the shelters. We also had tins filled with biscuits in case the raid went on for a long time.

Margaret went on to Moulsham Senior Girls' School for a couple of years, before transferring to the Tech, aged 13. She has kindly sent copies of photographs from about 1944 of a drama group and a gymnastics display at the Seniors. Many of the girls had been at the Juniors with her. We shall display both pictures at the Open Afternoon. Among the names she remembers are: Molly Bloomfield, Ann Wilson, Ruby Vaughan, Janice Digby, Jean Hasler, Irene Gooch, Beryl Wyatt, Beryl Goulden, Trixie Brewer, Yvonne Baker, Marie Olds, Joan Podd, Jean Roberts, Joan Lamb, Brenda Morrela, Brenda Giles, and Dorothy Holden.

From the 1938-48 Souvenir Edition of the Moulsham Junior Boys' School Magazine

"In the autumn of 1940 three of our staff, Mr A G Burtt, Mr R G Hymas and Mr H J Picken, all within a month, were called up to His Majesty's Forces. Mr Burtt, before his return five and a half years later, was to travel with the First Army through North Africa, and then with the famous Eighth Army through Sicily and Italy; Mr Picken, nearly six years away, finished up in Palestine, where, just before his return to England, he visited a Government Arab school at Tiberias (Galilee) and spoke to the boys there about Moulsham, the name of our school being entered in the Arab School's Log Book; Mr Hymas remained in this country as an instructor in Anti-Aircraft Command. For those of the staff remaining at Moulsham there was the no less arduous ARP work of wardens' duties, fire-guards and the like.

During the years 1939-45 our School played its part loyally in the various activities and campaigns to aid in the successful operation of the war. Collections were made on behalf of the British Red Cross and Overseas League Tobacco Fund; waste paper and scrap metal were collected in the Salvage Campaign (for the Chelmsford Books Drive Alone 12,000 books being handed in); whilst in the National Savings special weeks some truly remarkable figures were achieved: Warships Week, £131 13s 6d; Wings for Victory £1,429 4s 6d; Salute the Soldiers £729 7s; and Thanksgiving Week £631 11s 6d."

More about Mr W C C Turner: ("Uncle T")

Following the article about Moulsham benefactor in our Autumn 2001 Newsletter, **Brian Emmett** (1938-42), wrote saying that he met up with 'Uncle T' quite often during the war years: "My maternal Grandmother and a maiden Aunt lived at 42 New Writtle Street. Uncle T's house was one side of the driveway to the Eastern National Omnibus Company Head Office and Works. My Grandmother lived in one of the small cottages on the other side of the drive. I regularly visited my Grandmother and would often stay the night. Uncle T got to know and gave me an open invitation to call and see him whenever I liked. He would talk about books, his garden, something of his work at Crompton Parkinson's, but in the main of what he liked doing for young people. I have often thought that these talks had an influence on how I conducted my life. We could do with a few Uncle T's about at the present time. I clearly remember Uncle T's Housekeeper, although not her name. I am sure it began with an 'Mc', as she was Scottish. The local residents were allowed to use the Eastern National air raid shelter, and Uncle T and his Housekeeper would join them when there was a heavy raid on. I would meet up with Uncle T after the war at Scout functions, and my Father knew him well, as they were colleagues together at Crompton Parkinson's."

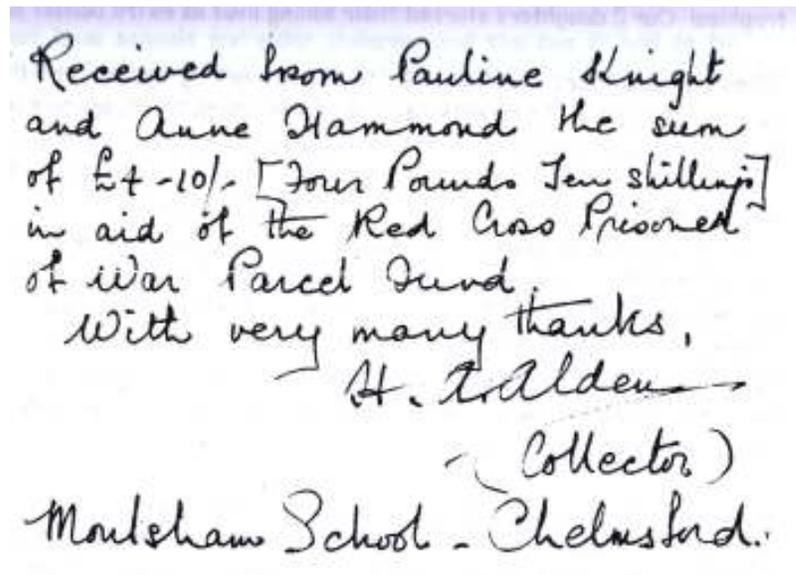
Another correspondent from the early days, **Don Post**, writes: "I can recall memories of the times spent with Mr Turner, to whom I and many others of my 'generation' owed a great deal". He points out that Mr Turner was not himself a great fan of City Football Club, but the visiting boys certainly liked to watch from 50 New Writtle Street. Don adds that in the middle 1950s, Mr Turner moved from New Writtle Street to Galleywood, where he lived out the rest of his days. [This is indeed confirmed by Kelly's Directory, which shows Mr Turner's address as "Wealdside", 126 Galleywood Road, Chelmsford, in 1955, 1958 and 1961.]

Red Cross Parcels for Prisoners of War

Jean Taylor (nee Whittle) 1940-46, was one of several Moulsham Junior Girls who collected money for Red Cross parcels during the war. In her case there was a special reason: her friend Valerie Cass's father was himself a Prisoner of War. Jean writes: "Valerie and I used to have a stall in my front garden and sold books, toys, flowers and anything else we could get hold of to sell. The money was used to send Red Cross parcels to POWs. They cost 10/- each [50p in our money now]. I still have letters of thanks for doing it. Valerie joined the WRNS, and the last I heard of her she was living in New Zealand."

Pauline Digby (nee Knight), was another enthusiastic collector for Red Cross parcels, and sends us this copy of a receipt for money she collected with her friend and classmate Anne Hammond.

(more news from Jean Taylor in News in brief, page 16)



Received from Pauline Knight
and Anne Hammond the sum
of £4-10/- [Four Pounds Ten shillings]
in aid of the Red Cross Prisoners
of War Parcel Fund.
With very many thanks,
H. Alden
(Collector)
Moulsham School - Chelmsford.

Janet Crafer, nee Saltmarsh, 1941-45

I was a pupil at Moulsham Infants from September 1939 and then the Junior Girls' School from 1941 until 1945 when I went on to Chelmsford High School.

The other day I came across the enclosed photograph. My brother David who is standing up remembers the date exactly as it was taken on his birthday, 20th August 1940. The other two boys in the photograph are Derek Hall, wearing the tin hat, and John Rolston. We all lived in Goldlay Avenue and the picture was taken at the entrance to the Hall's Anderson Shelter. My brother who was 10 that day must have just left the Junior school and would be starting at the King Edward V1 Grammar School in the September. I was only 6 and still in the Infants.



At the Junior School, I started in Miss Wright's Class and then jumped to Class 3 with Miss Barton, Class 4 with Miss Firman and lastly with Miss Sawday in Class 5. The thorough grounding we were given in the 3 R's has been so beneficial to me all my life. I recently found an envelope containing lists of my exam. results from class 1 to 5. How neat my writing was in those days! The number of pupils averaged 45 in Class 1 and 51 in Class 5! Miss Rankin, the Head Mistress I remember very well. I was very shy and she would send me on errands to the Infants' School to help me overcome this. She was very kind, but very strict. We all, or nearly all worked very hard. I was very happy at school.

From Moulsham Juniors I went on to Chelmsford High School when Miss Cadbury was Head Mistress. I had overcome my shyness and was the School Games captain in my last year. In October 1952 I started training as a Physiotherapist at the London Hospital in Whitechapel, now the Royal London Hospital. After graduating in 1955 and working on at the London Hospital I soon began to get "itchy feet" and in 1957 I emigrated to Canada. For 8 years I continued working as a physiotherapist, travelling from Canada to the United States, to Australia and lastly to Switzerland, before finally "settling down" only 20 miles from Chelmsford! I had met my husband when on a holiday in the Lake District learning to sail and he lived at Leigh-on-Sea. We married in 1966 and still live in Leigh. All our summer weekends were spent racing a Wayfarer Dinghy. We were very competitive and won many trophies! Our 2 daughters started their sailing lives as extra ballast when the weather was rough!

When our daughters started school I began working again part-time in private practice, latterly working from home. I only retired 2 years ago! Both our daughters inherited my "itchy" feet, and my husband's love of sailing. Our eldest daughter Sue, is a physiotherapist too and also a professional sailor. In 1993/4 she was a crew member on the all-women's yacht "Heineken" which raced in the Whitbread Round the World Race. Last year she was the British Olympic Sailing team's Physiotherapist. Now she lives in Sydney with her Australian boyfriend. Our youngest daughter Angie has emigrated to Auckland in New Zealand. She graduated at Bristol University in Engineering Mathematics and eventually found a job as a Traffic Planner and Designer. She is now living and working in Auckland enjoying the competitive sailing and all the outdoor activities that New Zealand has to offer. Although we encouraged our daughters to sail and to travel we are rather sad that they have settled so far away. But we are fortunate that we are able to visit them in the beautiful countries of Australia and New Zealand.

Throughout my life I have continued my love of sport (hockey, tennis, badminton, sailing, skiing) but now I only play social tennis, sail for pleasure and play competitive bowls, especially outdoor bowls. I am now acquiring some computer skills. Very time absorbing, but very interesting.

School Transport, by Jennifer Bailey (nee Rayner) 1943-47

Do you remember how you travelled to and from the Junior School? In the 1940s, if you lived close by, you walked. I was an only child, and did not have a big sister to take me, so I was entrusted to Gillian Dodson, who took her sister Iris and some others from the Lower Anchor Street/Moulsham area. By the time we reached Vicarage Road there was quite a little band of us. If you stayed to school dinners, this only happened twice a day, but if you had sampled the menu for a week and could not face it again, you would go home for your midday meal, walking backwards and forwards four times a day.

Morning and evening, however, there was the option of travelling on the Eastern National school bus. This bus came along Moulsham Street, stopping at the Kings Arms pub (now 'CM2') and St John's Church, turning into Vicarage Road to pick up children near Finchley Avenue and then straight on to the school gates. In the winter, my Mother thought it would be a good idea if, in the mornings, I went on the bus. She saw me on to the bus at St John's Church, and there seemed to be a lot of noise with boys and girls all mixed together. Quite an experience, because there were no mixed classes in those days. I arrived home at 'dinner-time' with tears in my eyes. I told my Mother "I am never going on the bus again". All the boys had taken it in turns to sit behind me and pull my very long plaits! After that, I went back to walking!

Joan Atkins remembers that most of the buses were double deckers, but one bus, a single decker, was regularly driven by an older man, nicknamed 'Swifty' by the children because he drove more slowly than the other drivers. Joan was picked up at the old Kings Arms, and recalls vividly her mother warning her as a seven year old not to go upstairs where "all the rough boys were". What Joan and I want to know is, were any of you one of those boys?

At eleven years old, attending the Senior School brought new options. Some of us still walked, but with different friends, because some of our previous pals were now at the High School or Technical School. But by this time some of us had acquired a bicycle - usually passed down from someone else - and were allowed to cycle to school. This certainly speeded things up. But whatever the reason, under no circumstances was anyone allowed to cycle up or down the school drive. Sometimes the walk along that drive, pushing your bike, seemed never-ending!

Outlying areas of Chelmsford did not have schools for older children, and the bus it had to be. Maureen Oliver (Stanbury) came from the Chelmer Road area, and says that school Bus Prefects were appointed to try and keep 'order' on the journey - but no-one took very much notice!

Galleywood girls would have to walk up Longstomps Avenue and hope to get on a Billericay Eastern National service bus, which as often as not was full of High School and Grammar School pupils. Shirley Lonsdale (Aylett) and Rosemarie Eve (Cardy) found on many occasions that they had to walk all the way to Galleywood. Now if you happened to have had cookery class that day, walking home with your baking could prove tricky. When you proudly opened your bag to show your efforts at home, either you had lost half of it on the way or it was a rather misshapen tart or cake which greeted Mother!

If any of you can recall happenings on your journeys to and from Moulsham School, we should love to hear your stories. They might well jog our own memories, and bring back still more forgotten recollections to enjoy.

Cup Winners in 1946/47



Thank you to **Colin Moore** for sending us this photo of the Moulsham Junior Boys' School Football Team 1946/47. The team were cup winners in that season, and in the league finished second only to Kings Road Juniors, who had future Chelmsford City star Tony Butcher in their side. In the photo are Headmaster Mr Petchey and sports teacher Mr Burtt, as well as (back row left to right): Colin Moore, Barry Hills, Bill Osborne, Doug Brooker, Brian Saunders, Tommy McGovern, and (front row): Barry Jacobs, Tom Filby, John Carter, Mick Wright, Clive Barker, B. Graham and Teddy Beerman.

Colour comes to Moulsham in 1954

Some of you will no doubt remember the immediate post-war days when schools and other municipal buildings seemed to be decorated inside with drab shades of cream and brown. It was well into the 1950s that bright and varied colours became available. This piece by Michael Cook, Standard IIa, in the 1954 Boys' School Magazine, recalls the impact of the 'new look' at Moulsham:

"We had our classrooms redecorated. While it was being done we had our lessons in the Hall. First the painters covered the cupboards with sheets to prevent them being splashed with distemper. Then they put on the undercoat. It took them a whole week exactly to finish the room. It looked very nice.

The ceiling is ivory and the walls are done in two colours; the top half is pink and the lower half pearl grey. The radiators and door are dark blue. The window frames and door frames are primrose yellow."

Wow! Do any of you remember other décor makeovers during your time at the school?

Do you remember Basil Campen?

One of the documents we found again when the papers and photos from the 1999 reunion came to light last term was a letter from Bob Campen, known in Chelmsford as Basil. He was a pupil at Moulsham Junior Boys' School from 1946-49. Bob has kindly given us permission to include extracts from that 1999 letter in this newsletter.

"In those far-off days, a high fence divided the playground, so that boys were on one side and girls on the other. There were cycle racks and air raid shelters on the left on our way in, and absolutely no-one was brought to school by car.

Mr Petchey was headmaster while I was at the school. He used to live in Sandford Road, and cycled to school, usually wearing his pork-pie hat, and often with his raincoat over his shoulder. He was a good hearted man, but could appear very angry, and went crimson when in full flight, so we were scared of him. As a matter of fact, his sister Bertha became the second wife of my great-uncle John Campen - not that this earned me any favours!

In those years immediately after the war, the school was bursting with boys. Classes were regularly over 40, and I recall the record as being 52 or 53. My first teacher was Miss Howes in Standard 1. I found myself being called "Basil", which is my real first name, while everyone else was called by his surname. I had until then been in a private school, Miss Stock's in St John's Road, and was quite unaccustomed to the manly practice of using bare surnames.

I proceeded to standards 2 and 3, though I cannot now remember the names of my teachers. I believe Mr Hymas became teacher of standard 3, but by then I had been "promoted". He was tall, had a moustache, and lived in St John's Avenue. Mr Hodgson taught standard 4, though I bypassed it. He was my neighbour in Goldlay Avenue. My last year was in 4a, where the teacher was Mr William Wallace Gardiner. He seemed really old to us - more grandparents' than parents' generation. He lived in Writtle, and used to cycle to school rather sedately. He was organist at Widford Parish Church, and imparted to us a few ideas of doubtful veracity. One I remember was that the water used in C of E baptisms was holy, having been brought from the Jordan, so it was not permissible to let it run away down the drain, but it had to soak away into the ground! He was a bit eccentric and irascible, but did well for us. I passed the 11 plus and went on to King Edward VI Grammar School.

We thought Princes Road was terribly busy in those days, and a crossing lady was always on duty before and after school and at lunch time. School buses always set down and picked up on the school side of the road, and after school, those heading for Great Baddow or Hanningfield had to go all the way to the Wood Street roundabout, encircle it, and run back past the school on the other side.

When mentioning Mr Hodgson above, I forgot to say that he wrote the school song, which began:

"Let us sing of our school
For under its rule
We prepare for our manhood to come"

Then followed a bit about striving to be loyal, and then the resounding climax:

"Moulsham for ever, and Moulsham again
Resound till the rafters ring."

Memories from Jim Simpson, another graduate of Miss Stock's academy

Whilst pondering the selection of magazines & newspapers at the 'City Barbers', a renowned and long established salon for the discerning, I happened upon a green covered booklet, Summer 2001, Past Pupils Newsletter.....what a delight...what memories were stirred by the contents, and those names from yesteryear!

My time at Moulsham was from 1943, I think, to 1946, having passed my exams from the school at the top of St John's Road, Misses Stock & Clarke?...in tying shoelaces & blowing my nose (Distinction). A red faced, almost maroon, Mr Petchey was the Head Master with an Attendance Officer, Mr Murphy, to chase up the non-attenders, keeping us all under control. Lusty singing in the shelters figures greatly in my memory, for it was this, I am sure, ruined any future aspirations I may have had towards an operatic career.

During the day I can recall 'Daddy Gardiner' trying vainly to teach us, wielding his trusty 12 inch ruler flattening the back of our legs.....only recently have I been able to remove the 7,8 & 9inch markings from the back of my legs...I may require counselling on this. We loved him!

To get to school there was a varied selection of routes....Oaklands Park detour to test out the infamous Widford Gang...thence on to Princes Road, checking the state of the red brick wall at the top of Vicarage Road, for penny rubbing....or the scrumping possibilities of the apples beyond.....or through Fred Skipsey's house, watching him devour a boiled egg, . . . thence over the field to the Main Entrance.....or up the 'Cinder Track' waking up 'Bundles' and on to Princes Road, picking up debris from the nights sky battles...perspex, to carve the rings for the local beauties, or barrage balloon segments, that I think our mothers made into knickers for our older sisters.

After school it was always over Curries' fields, next to the School in those days, to select the best cow pats for 'skidability'. The longest skid, without falling over, was the winner, and I think that we all wore brown trousers in those days.

Somewhere bobbles made out of wool strands pulled through Magness milk bottle tops, washed I think...features in my mind as a schoolday project, the end result being sewn onto a woollen hat. I remember that I had problems with my tops as we were 'Co-op' and different bottle covers and my Mum would not knit me the hat. I could ramble on forever . . .

News in brief

Ruby Lightfoot (nee Orrin), 1944-48, was pleased with the latest Newsletter, which "once again has proved a very interesting read". Ruby was sorry to miss the 2001 reunion s she was out of town, but will make every effort to be with us on 18th May this year.

We look forward to meeting **Tony Brown**, 1952-56, for the first time at the Open Afternoon. Tony was at the Infants' School from 1951, and went on to KEGS in 1956. He recalls Mr Hodgson as one of his Junior class teachers.

Sandra Thomas (also nee Thomas), 1949-53, has kindly provided names for the copy of her 1949 Infants Class photo, which will be on display on 18th May. Names she remembers from her year include Gillian Hymas, Valerie Bradford, Heather Stewart, Margaret Grace, Margaret Eves, Diane Barker, Sylvia Smith, Janet Hayward, Maureen Smith and Helen Nash. She is still in touch with Diane Barker,

Gillian Hymas and Margaret Eves. Only half the class at a time posed for the photo, so someone somewhere may very well have a similar picture showing the other half of the class. Do let us know if you have a copy. Sandra recalls walking to school every day from Waterhouse Lane (a lengthy trek!), sometimes calling in with her Mother to visit a series of relatives who lived at a house in Vicarage Road - first her Great Aunt, then her Grandfather, followed by an Aunt and Uncle. Family still play a major role in Sandra's life, as she is currently busy looking after both her Mother and a four-year-old grandson.

Claire Houlton (nee Bigg), attended the Juniors from 1969-73 and lived in Mews Court until she met and married her husband Harry in 1987. Claire has also finds the newsletters very interesting, and was saddened to hear of Mr Picken's death. He was her class teacher in the fourth year and she has such fond memories of him. Since leaving school, Claire has held many administrative posts, mainly in Personnel and Training. In 1992 she became a full time student at APU, Cambridge, graduating in 1995 with a 2.1 BA (Hons) in European Philosophy and Literature and a baby boy (Alex, now aged 7)! She comments "I have never done things the easy way!" Since then she has very much enjoyed being a full time mother and, for the past 2½ years, working on a casual basis as a Museum assistant at Oaklands Museum. Claire looks forward to hearing about other past pupils and to a reunion in the near future.

John Lewis, 1961-68, has recently been sent a copy of our first ever newsletter (Autumn 1999), in which he gets a Mention in Despatches on p.15, where Sue Bruns recalls sitting next to 'a blond haired boy called John Lewis'. We are delighted to add John to our mailing list, and hope we may hear more from him for a future issue.

We were pleased to hear from **Jean Taylor (nee Whittle)**, sister of John Whittle, who started in the infants in September 1938. She lived in Upper Bridge Road, but when the family home was bombed out, they moved to Elm Road and eventually to Widford, where she knew Miss Rankin, the first Headmistress of the Junior Girls' School. Along with many of her classmates, Jean went on from the Juniors to the Senior Girls' School, and she has kindly sent us a photo of a cookery class at the Seniors, which we shall display at the Open Afternoon on 18th May. Names Jean remembers include Diane Lawson, who always sang solo in the music lesson, her friend Valerie Cass (see also page 10), Jean Pennark, June Joslin, Doreen Whittaker, Rosalie Sexton, Doreen Lamb, Jean Churchyard, Julia Fairhead, Margaret Allen, Marjorie Watts, Margaret King and Beryl Harvey. Jean says that she saw Dorothy Holden a few years ago, and although they hadn't met for over 50 years, they still recognised one another! Dorothy went to the High School, so they had lost touch. She has a brother, Wesley, who also went to Moulsham and still lives in Chelmsford. Dorothy Holden's father was what we now call a 'Lollipop Man', who saw the children safely across Princes Road. Jean herself married in 1955 at Widford Church, and Moulsham teacher Mr Gardiner played the organ at the wedding.

Can you help us please?

We are very grateful to those who have already offered to help with setting up and running the Open Afternoon. If any more of you would like to join us on the Friday afternoon (17th May) to set up displays, and/or on Saturday 18th to help man the reception desk or take down displays at 5pm, we should love to hear from you.

With our mailing list expanding all the time, we should also be pleased to hear from anyone living locally who would be prepared to give up one day from time to time to help label, stuff and post envelopes containing each new Newsletter. May sound like hard work, but actually good fun!